

BETWEEN FLORENCE AND AVIGNON

manifesting His wondrous mysteries in such wise that my soul seemed not still to be in the body, and received such fulness of delight that no tongue can tell it; for He explained and in part set forth the mystery of the persecution which Holy Church is now enduring, and of the renovation and exaltation which she is to have in the time to come, and said that the present time is permitted in order to restore her state to her.¹ And the first sweet Truth quoted two words that are in the Holy Gospel: // *must needs be that offences come into the world; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh*; as though to say : [£] I suffer this time of persecution in order to extirpate the thorns of My Spouse, for she is all full of brambles ; but I do not suffer the evil cogitations of men. Knowest thou what I am doing ? I am doing as I did when I was in the world, when I made the scourge of small cords, and cast out them that sold and bought in the Temple, not suffering that My Father's house should be made a den of thieves. So I tell thee I am doing now; for I have made a scourge of creatures, and by that scourge I am casting out the merchants —impure, greedy, avaricious, and puffed-up with pride—who sell and buy the gifts of the Holy Spirit.' Thus I understood that He was casting them out by the scourge of human persecution; that is, by means of tribulation and persecution, He would free them from their disordered and impure living. And, while the fire of holy desire increased within me, as I gazed, I saw the Christian people and the unbelievers enter into the side of Christ crucified ; and I, by desire and the affection of love, passed through the midst of them, entering with them into Christ sweet Jesus, accompanied by my father St. Dominic, and my special John with all my children.² Then He laid the Cross upon my neck and put the olive into my hand, even as though I wished it, and bade me offer them to one people and to the other ; and He said to me : ' Say unto them :

¹ *i. e.* her primitive state of purity, not her temporal possessions.

³ *Giovanni singolare con tutti quanti i Jighuoh met.* My translation is intended to suggest that " Giovanni singolare " is Fra Raimondo himself, who tells us that Catherine called him "John." Cf. *Legettda*, Prologue I. (§ 6).